

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 INRE-00 EB-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 PM-09 NSC-10

SS-14 H-02 RSR-01 /100 W  
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P R 030930 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1019

INFO URUFHBS/ AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 3240

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 1528

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, NL

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENTARY LEADER WESTERTERP' S COMMENTS ON WAY OUT  
OF GOVERNMENT IMPASSE

1. SUMMARY. DURING CONVERSATION WITH DCM ON APR 2 FORMER FOREIGN AFFAIRS STATE SECRETARY WESTERTERP, NOW DEPUTY FLOOR LEADER OF KVP PARLIAMENTARY GROUP, EXPLANINED HIS ABORTIVE PROPOSAL OVER WEEKEND TO ALLOW KVP MINISTERIAL PARTICIPATION IN A DEN UYL CABINET PROVIDED THAT SUCH CABINET COULD RESIGN ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE ONLY IF 2/3 OF ITS MEMBERS FAVORED THAT STEP ( ON BASIS OF FORMATEUR BURGER' S PRESENT DISCUSSIONS, KVP AND ARP WOULD BE GIVEN SIX OUT OF 16 MINISTERIAL SEATS IN A DEN UYL CABINET, AND COULD THUS UNDER WESTERTERP' S PROPOSAL BLOCK ANY LEFT WING ATTEMPT TO DISBAND DEN UYL GOVT PREMATURELY). IT WAS AND IS WESTERTERP' S JUDGMENT THAT BURGER WILL VERY LIKELY SUCCEED IN FORMING A DEN UYL GOVT SINCE KVP PARLIAMENTARY GROUP LEADER ANDRIESSEN HAS SAID THAT HIS GROUP WILL " TOLERATE" SUCH A GOVT AND HAS ALSO SAID THAT HE SAW NO ALTERNATIVE GOVERNMENTAL POSSIBILITY AT THIS MOMENT. WESTERTERP' S MOTIVATION, DOUBTLESS INFLUENCED BY HIS PERSONAL AMBITION, BOILS DOWN TO " IF YOU CAN' T BEAT THEM, JOIN THEM". IN SHORT, SINCE IN HIS VIEW LEFT WING GOVT IS INEVITABLE, IT IS BETTER TO HAVE SOME CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT MINISTERS IN IT TO INFLUENCE AND MODERATE

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IT INSTEAD OF TRYING TO ATTACK IT FROM THE OUTSIDE. COROLLARY TO WESTERTERP' S BASIC ASSUMPTION IS THAT DEN UYL GOVT, EVEN THOUGH A MINORITY GOVT IN SECOND CHAMBER, WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE MINORITY GOVT IN THE COUNTRY. SUCH GOVT, WESTERTERP ARGUES, WOULD ALONE DECIDE WHAT ISSUES TO BRING BEFORE PARLIAMENT AND PARTICULARLY HOW TO PRESENT THEM; E. G., TO PROPOSE SOME APPARENTLY INNOCUOUS SAVINGS IN DEFENSE BUDGET IN ORDER TO ALLOCATE MORE TO SOCIAL WELFARE. FOR THIS REASON WESTERTERP FEARS THAT AS OPPOSITION PARTY KVP, DIVIDED AS IT IS IN ITS LEADERSHIP AND AMONG ITS ELECTORATE, WOULD HAVE REAL DIFFICULTY IN UNANIMOUSLY VOTING FOR CENSURE MOTION AGAINST DEN UYL GOVT. END SUMMARY.

2. NOTING THAT HE HAD MET WITT FORMATEUR BURGER ON EVENING OF MAR 30 ( WHICH DUTCH MEDIA HAVE NOT YET CAUGHT UP WITH), WESTERTERP SAID THAT BURGER APPEARED TO BE SYMPATHETIC TO HIS PROPOSAL AS DESCRIBED IN PARA 1. WESTERTERP DID NOT EXPLAIN WHAT HAD MOTIVATED HIM TO ADVANCE THESE PROPOSALS WITHOUT HAVING HAD OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THEM IN ADVANCE WITH KVP GROUP LEADER ANDRIESEN. THIS HAD EVOKED PROMPT PUBLIC REACTION OF SURPRISE AND REMONSTRANCE BY ANDRIESEN. AT ENSUING MEETING OF KVP PARLIAMENTARY LEADERSHIP GROUP ON MORNING OF APRIL 2 WESTERTERP SAID HE HAD NOT REPEAT NOT ELICITED ANY SUPPORT FOR HIS PROPOSAL S. HE HAD THEREUPON ISSUED PRESS STATEMENT SAYING THAT HE WITHDREW THEM. HE EXPLAINED TO DCM THAT HE HAD DONE THIS TO PRESERVE PARTY UNITY, EVEN THOUGH HE STILL BELIEVED THAT HIS JUDGEMENT HAD BEEN RIGHT.

3. COMMENT: THIS MAY TURN OUT TO BE JUST ONE MORE SURPRISING EPISODE IN WHAT EMBASSY HAS DESCRIBED AS " PERILS OF PAULINE" CHARACTER OF MR. BURGER' S WHOLE FORMATION EFFORT. WETERTERP EXPECTS TO TAKE CONSIDERABLE FLAK FROM FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE FOR HIS SHORT- LIVED INITIATIVE BUT THAT DOES NOT PARTICULARLY BOTHER HIM. ADEPT AT THE INTRICATE GAME OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS AND AN INDEFATIGABLE PRAGMATIST, WESTERTERP HOPES THAT HIS " SHOCK" TACTICS MAY PRECIPITATE FINAL COLLAPSE OF BURGER' S EFFORTS, WHICH HE SAYS HE NEVER WANTED TO SUCCEED. WESTERTERP PROFESSES TO BE READY TO CLIMB INTO NEW GOVT WITH LIBERALS BUT ASSERTS THAT ANDRIESEN' S " NO ALTERNATIVE TO THE BURGER GAMBIT" HAS LEFT MAJORITY OF KVP PARLIAMENTARY GROUP UNPREPARED FOR NEW CHANGE IN SIGNALS. HE ADDED THAT DESPITE HIGHLY CONSERVATIVE, ANTI- LABOR PARTY LINE DISPENSED BY LIBERAL PARTY LEADER WIEGEL DURING LAST NOVEMBER' S ELECTION CAMPAIGN, WIEGEL TOLD WESTERTERP IN CONFIDENCE FEW DAYS AGO THAT HIS PARTY WOULD BE PREPARED TO

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JOIN IN AN EXTRA- PARLIAMENTARY GOVT WITH CONFESSIONALS AND A SELECTION OF MODERATE SOCIALISTS ( ESSENTIAL TO PROTECT WESTERTERP AS SOURCE OF THIS STATEMENT).

4. WESTERTERP' S HOPE IS THAT FONMIN SCHMELZER, AS THE ONLY REAL LEADER KVP HAS, WILL STEP FORWARD AT THIS JUNCTURE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO LEFT WING GOVT WHICH BURGER IS TRYING TO FORM. ACCORDING TO WESTERTERP THE EFFECT WOULD BE ELCTRIFYING. ALL OF KVP WOULD RALLY BEHIND SCHMELZER, WHO WOULD THUS BE IN POSITION TO FORM BROAD- BASED, DURABLE GOVT. THE PROBLEM IS, WESTERTERP CONCLUDED, TO PERSUADE SCHMELZER, A DIFFIDENT MAN WHO DOES NOT REALLY WANT TO BE PRIMIN, TO CHALLENGE DEN UYL OPENLY FOR LEADERSHIP OF THE COUNTRY. WESTERTERP MADE NO PREDICTIONS BUT HE THOUGHT THAT IT WAS JUST POSSIBLE THAT A TURNING POINT MIGHT FINALLY HAVE BEEN REACHED IN THE GOVERNMENTATL IMPASSE WHICH HAS JUST SET A LONG- EVITY RECORD FOR THE NETHERLANDS.  
MIDDENDORF

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